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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses classroom life in formal adult education, specifically rhetoric concerning the idea of the adult learners' own interest as a driving force for learning. Its two objectives are to describe social interaction as related to this andragogical ideal and the conditions for learning and to raise some methodological standpoints in the ethnographic approach aimed at studying learning from the learners' perspective. It begins with a short description of the Swedish context in adult education, highlighting Sweden's long tradition in municipal adult education, folk high schools, and study circles. Then, the case study is introduced. After that, a scene from the classroom is described the meeting between the adult participants and the teacher. Some biographical pieces as related to learning are then shown. Fragments are collected from interviews with two women and narrate motives for studying and conceptions of the educational event as well as self-image. In summarizing the study's line of reasoning, the paper concludes that androgogical ideals or pedagogical thinking putting the participant at the center of attention with a large locus of control in formal learning are not problematic in themselves. But the problem is that educational institutions assume these ideals at the rhetorical level, not taking into consideration practical consequences such as placing the burden of structuring course content on the student while retaining the power of student evaluation. (Contains 46 references and 63 footnotes.) (YLB)

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ED 463 441

"What did you learn in school today…?"

Everyday patterns of classroom interaction in adult education -who learns what?

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Main issue

In this paper we want to discuss classroom life in formal adult education, specifically the rhetorics concerning the idea of the adult learners' own interest as a driving force for learning. The main issue is to describe social interaction as related to this andragogical[1] ideal and the conditions for learning. Another issue to raise is some methodological standpoints in the ethnographic[2] approach aimed at studying learning from the learners' perspective. The result poses the question; Who learns what?

We begin with a short description of the Swedish context in adult education. Then we introduce the case study. After that we describe a scene from the classroom, the meeting between the adult participants and the teacher. Finally we show some biographical pieces as related to learning.

Introduction

In Sweden we have a long tradition in municipal adult education, folkhighschools and studycircles. In 1997 the Swedish government started the Adult Education Initiative (AEI, in swedish 'Kunskapslyftet') thus increasing the number of adult learners in these institutions by about 100 000 full time adult learners. The aim was to reduce unemployment and to upgrade the level in education of the Swedish labour force. Further, the goal was to generate experience and knowledge to make groundwork for a reform of adult education in Sweden. The target group of the AEI is unemployed adults lacking upper secondary qualifications, mainly those over 25 years of age. Since it was launched the AEI has been characterized by great variety. Education has been formed based on each municipality's interpretation of stated national and political goals. Even the target group has changed through the course of the project. Initially the AEI attracted those already prone to participate in higher level of education, and efforts were made to recruite others within the target group whose prior interest of adult education had been weak. The AEI, initially a project aimed at decreasing the rate of unemployment, became the sought for source of knowledge in developing a better

[1] Knowles (1980; 1985).
[2] Hammersley & Atkinson (1987; 1995); Ball (1993).

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curriculum of adult learning. Possibilites as well as impediments for participation have been made visible on the individual level. Experience and knowledge created while studying the AEI formed the underlying principles of the political proposal of the future infrastructure of adult education in Sweden made in 2001.

The task of evaluation of the AEI involves promoting the participants' role as related to learning. Our research project consists of a case study of one municipality. Questions raised in our research concern the meaning of participating in adult learning. We do a pragmatic differentiation since focus in the study is on the interplay between formal knowledge and everyday learning, rather than evaluation in terms of efficiency or effectiveness. Formal knowledge can be defined as the everyday curriculum participated in at school, while everyday learning is referred to as knowledge acquired outside school, before and after taking part in education.[3] Our perspective is that of the participant and we seek the significance of the participants' own interest in learning as related to the goal of education set up by the organiser. The research is focused on what takes place in the classroom and close examination the adult learners' working process. Hence, the study does not involve measurement of efficiency in terms of evaluating goals or doing cost-benefit analysis. In our ethnographic research the classroom interaction combined with the learners biographies are seen as conditions for learning. As PhD students we were lucky since the Swedish Ministry of Education literally bought our research interest as an evaluation question. As researchers we are concerned with the idea that a complex phenomenon like learning should be studied in a qualitative and longitudinal way. Our personal interest as ethical and political subjects is to sympathise with the participant in formal adult education and give voice to the learner herself.

Theoretical assumptions and methodology

In order to understand the empirical results we will shortly describe some fundamental assumptions. The point of departure is the American pragmatism and symbolic interactionism inspired by George H. Mead and social constructivism by Berger & Luckmann. As far as we understand symbolic interactionism (SI), one issue is that we are part of institutional frames like working life, education and free time activities. These contexts are socially constructed, shaped and reshaped by social actors. Institutional structures do not exist in isolation; instead they are constituted in social interaction. As social beings we are both creators and interpreters. *We do not see things as they are; we see them as we are.* The possibility of subjective interpretation is always present and a component in any social encounter. The subject creates her own interpretation as a part of a greater whole, consisting of experience of the past and present as well as presumptions of future experience related to places and specific situations. Placed in an institutional frame, similar to one in earlier experience, we tend to rutinize interpretation through co-ordinated action. In social interaction, interpretation and patterns of action are formed and take similar shape, even when competing systems of interpretation are present.[4]

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[3] Larsson (1996) makes use of the term 'everyday knowledge' and defines it as the learning experienced outside the formal system of education. Learning is defined as change in interpretation and action. Aspects of everyday life, such as own interests, family life, experience of working as well as self image, are central to describing everyday knowledge.
[4] Berger & Luckmann (1967).

In SI subjectivity is focused, when driven to its extent, the viewpoint in terms of subjectivity leads to sociality being expressed as individuality. Humans are born *someone* but become *no one* without social encounter and interaction.[5] The basis for analysis is the space or sociality created between the subject and the encountering society, i.e. intersubjectivity. Thought, speech and action must be seen as a result of the subject's conversation with others and within herself, rather than something created in isolation. Conversation takes place and is made with an invented or abstract other, which Mead called "the generalised Other"[6]. The image of the generalised other, the anonymous people with whom the subjects converse varies depending on with who the subject identifies herself with in the actual context. The image can consist of society as a whole, institutions like family, education, politics or tangible and abstract others. SI takes into consideration both the interactive and the intraactive level as human activity is socially constituted. Interpretation is created in private conversations within and between people. Conversation within the subject is dependent on the conversation with as well as between tangible others and generalised others. Thus, immediate dependence of the social context prevents the subject from being able to think completely freely. In other words, the individual and the social environment compose the same coin; analytically we might say they each constitute one of the coin's sides.

Patterns of social interaction[7] are focused when Mead guides us in studying the classroom as a social arena. The classroom could however, also be analysed as a cultural arena, thus portraying the societal construction of what "school" should mean and be. Viewing the school and classroom entirely from this point, an environment or institution determined by macrostructure, poses a risk of teachers and adult learners being "doomed" to reproduce society's norms and values. We do not seek to underestimate the significance of the surrounding framework but simply want to state that whatever goes on in the classroom would not be the same *unless the unique subjects involved in its practice are present.* Simultaneously interaction in the classroom is not created isolated or apart from society. In practice the different levels of perspective interact. However, in order to describe analysis we make a theoretical split between the two.[8]

Consequently, when arguing in a theoretical manner and thus making the split between the social and cultural perspective, the adult learners encounter the practice of school, still keeping intact their social properties defined by the context outside. Bringing multiple identities and everyday grammar, the adults approach school. They bring individual and/or collectively shared constructions of what school ought to be[9] -what should be learned and how it should be learned. One way of describing this scenario is that teachers are intentionally aware and explicit about which knowledge is to be developed and how it is to be done. This way learning can supposedly develop as intended.

Another viewpoint is to consider *the adult learners as actual participants* in the process of creating what becomes possible to learn.[10] We say each of the adult learners life histories, earlier experiences of school and their premonition of the future is important to their actual

[5] Mead (1913); Biesta (1999 a, b).
[6] Mead (1934/1967).
[7] Action is defined in a pragmatic way, as a symbolic expression for thought, speech and concrete action.
[8] Rogoff (1995).
[9] Carlgren (1998).
[10] Biesta (1999). Discusses education as communication, where teaching is not about transferring knowledge from one part to another. People are seen as interacting subjects and constructors of meaning. "…education is not a process of transfer, it is a communicative action, a participatory and co-constructive process."

possibilities of learning.[11,12] As one might put it "In an effort to make shortcake, putting shorty in the oven won't get you far!" (free translation from Swedish).[13] If being part of the practice of school is something not strived for by adult learners, the teacher's possible effect on their learning is limited. The adult learners create and develop their own learning through keeping intact their identities constructed in their everyday context outside school. Their learning is also related to subjectively perceived and thought out projects of bildung[14].

The complexity of the picture painted here rises when considering every participant's multiple projects of bildung. Included is also the assumption that each of the projects of bildung participants undertake can change during the course of time of an educational event. Examining the adult learners' projects of bildung reveals their intentions or reasons for participation. Earlier experience of encounters with school, family, friends, unemployment agencies and so forth make basis for the adult learner's perception of the meaning of participation. It is with these constructions the adult learners again encounter what they perceive as school. In order to fully understand the classroom as an arena of encounters between different actors it is fruitful to study the constructions of both teachers and the adult learners. In a relational perspective single actor's purpose and experience are considered of less interest. The focus is the meaning created and recreated in continuous intersubjective processes. Meaning does not exist in itself but is constructed and evolves in the interaction with others. If teachers do not consider the adult learner's intentions or experience of any importance, symbolically, they do not exist. It is not about owning or being yourself, but about being attributed existence and becoming in social interaction with others.[15] From a relational perspective it is therefore not enough to study learning based only on interview data.

The above reasoning leads to a portrait of the classroom as an unpredictable arena, open to different on going activities and negotiation.[16] It is all about what and how you do things as well as what is talked about and how. The term negotiation implies a perspective of power.[17] The main issue concerning power is what is defined as knowledge and who defines it. Will the adult learner be able to construct knowledge on the same conditions as the teacher? Or is the teacher perceived as the one having the answers?[18] In essence; on which conditions do

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[11] Biesta (1999c). Based on the reasoning of Mead, Biesta argues similarly, "…the social character of education implies that the meanings that are at stake in the process of education only arise through the reaction of the learner. …the content of education only exists intersubjectively, or "in communication". …to put it in more practical terms, brings into vision that the learner herself is a "curriculum maker". p 492.

[12] Alheit (1995); Dausien (2000); Bron (2001a, b); Larsson (2001a). Another way to see adult learners as "curriculum maker" or co-creators of learning means using peoples biographies as the viewpoint of interpretation.

[13] Quote of Mr. Mark Levengood, "Guldbaggegalan" (a Swedish Film Festival) February 5, 2001: "Nog kan man lägga sockor i ugnen, men int' blir det sockerkaka för det!".

[14] The concept of the project of bildung is inspired by Gustavsson & Larsson (1994). In this text the term project of bildung is defined in three dimensions: The purpose of studying – what the aim of studying?, the interest of studying – how much room for studying will the adult learner's everyday life allow?, and organising the studies –what is to be learned and how is it to be done? Like Gustavsson & Larsson we mean that the concept of the project of bildung reveals the dimension of time, where past, present and future cross paths. Earlier experience is of importance for whatever one encounters today which also interacts with premonitions of the future.

[15] Biesta (1999b).

[16] Larsson (1993).

[17] Ball (1993); Foucault (1972; 1993).

[18] Larsson (1983).

adult learners actually perceive what is accepted as knowledge?[19] In our view, the participation in any event will always result in learning through processes shaping and reshaping practice. Consequently, the research question posed in the relational and biographical perspective[20] is *Who learns what?* Or more specifically *In what way does education influence the individuals everyday life?* In the perspective chosen in this study, adults involved in education are considered taking responsibility for what is possible to learn. The adult learner is the one accepting and admitting influence based on his or her biography and chosen project/s of bildung. The teacher is portrayed playing the professional role, responsible for the formal situation of learning, pedagogically as well as organisationally. The viewpoint taken does not value either part a hero or villain, blessed by her own merits, but instead the relation between the teacher and the adult learner is focused. Focused in terms of tangible *and* generalised others. Thus, it is of no interest to examine learning only in terms of the learner's attained knowledge and acquired results as related to the questions posed and asked by the teacher. The issue is rather asking the adult learner about which meaning or learning they create and construct as related to school practice. We state that the perspective of the learner can create conditions for understanding learning as a phenomenon.

Design of the study

When choosing an ethnographic approach, learning is focused from the learner's perspective.[21] In order to understand the outcome, the adults are observed in the classroom and interviews are made inspired by biographical approaches in the beginning, during as well as after the educational event. As ethnographers we try to describe and understand everyday patterns of interaction in the classroom.[22] The classroom interaction and the biographies are in all interpreted as conditions for learning.[23] These patterns are processes partially related to the institutional context and municipal arena. The classroom is not an isolated unit, instead the surrounding conditions are considered frames for the curriculum being created. In our perspective the policy of the educational institution and the municipalities' interpretation of the AEI have impact on subject content and methods of teaching. The everyday curriculum, however, is created and constructed by the teachers and adult learners.[24]

Following an ethnographic research process we choose an open research question guiding us through decisions made in the study. Theory, method and sampling (persons, places and times) are created and shaped in a process characterized by reflexivity.[25] A crucial point is to modify the research question into more tangible and defined questions generated from/in

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[19] The teachers' instructions, no matter how well planned and explicit they are from the teachers' point of view, are interpreted in a variety of ways by the participants. According to this the teachers talk and actions can pass without leaving no trace, meaning the participants do not experience the interaction.
[20] Alheit (1995); West (1996); Dausien (2000); Bron & Schemmann (2001); Larsson (2001a); Bron (2001b).
[21] Borgnakke (2001).
[22] The adults participate in upper secondary education in three institutions: a folkhighschool, a municipal adult education and a private institution in distance education. We focused on subjects such as the Swedish language and social studies.
[23] Analytically we study learning in dimensions such as subject content, self efficiency and project of bildung, more specifically how these dimensions are constructed. They are studied through "facts" (frozen social and material constructions) the researches perspective (etic), the learners perspective (emic) and biographical analyses.
[24] Larsson (1983; 1993).
[25] Hammersley & Atkinson (1987;1995); Ball (1993).

practice.[26] In the municipality arena the actors are interviewed and observed while in decision making activities. Headmasters are interviewed and observed in order to describe the institutional curriculum. Teacher and participant interviews are made in order to understand the project of bildung. Participant observations are made to be able to describe what the participants have to deal with in the classroom and the meaning the adult learners perceive as related to what takes place.[27] The main issue is to identify the recurrent patterns of teaching and learning. The material consisting of interviews with the participants contains different kinds of interviews made in the beginning, during and a year after the educational event. In total we have gathered 10 hours of interview material with each of the 27 participants whose age range from 19 – 47 years. Shown below is an overview of the study.

Tableau 1: Data collection as related to year and actor

	-97	-98	-99	-00	-01
Politicians/bureaucrats	I, P, D	I, P, D	I, P	I, P	
Headmasters	I	I, P	P	P	
Teachers		I, P	I, P	I, P	
Participants			I, P	I, P	I

I=Interviews **P=Participant Observations** **D=Documents**

The learners' interest as a driving force for learning...

Andragogical ideals represented by authors like Freire[28] and Knowles[29] or pedagogical thinking inspired by Dewey[30] or Kolb[31] reveal and emphasise the assumption of paying attention to the participators' needs or wants in educational content and work processes. Learning is presumably created by adult learners seeking knowledge together in a group.[32] The search is based on the learners' interests rather than ready packaged knowledge in schoolbooks chosen by the teacher. The ideal breeding ground is therefore genuine interest in the learners and work processes involving true participation. Several of these ideas are also implemented in AEI policy on the national, municipal and institutional arenas. The question that poses itself is how these ideas are expressed in the classroom and what role they play as related to the learners.[33] At the centre of interest is to understand what the adult learner

[26] Borgnakke (1996; 2001).
[27] We have spent time in classrooms for one year. Participant observations where registered by tape recorder and fieldnotes were taken. During this year we had recurrent informal conversations with both teachers and learners.
[28] Freire (1973).
[29] Knowles (1980; 1985).
[30] Dewey (1916/1966; 1938/1965).
[31] Kolb (1984).
[32] Larsson et al (1990). Working together in a group is one of several dimensions related to andragogical ideals.
[33] Conditions for lifelong and lifewide learning require certain prerequisites for the adult educators. Firstly the learner has to be challenged in her interpretations. Secondly the content should appeal to the learners' interest. Thirdly the learner should experience the content as related to everyday life (Larsson, 1996).

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experiences in the classroom based on how education and the teachers are recognised by the learner. The creation of meaning is presented as a sort of 'triplet' where the gesture of a subject serves as a stimuli for the others response, together creating co-ordinated action. The actors involved are seen as participants in specific figurations rather than specific individuals.[34] The following scenario is thus made possible apart from the tangible subjects involved.

...staging an andragogical ideal

The scene is taken out of a class introducing the theme "Human Rights".[35] The topic is presented in a short version by the teacher and directed toward a whole group of adult learners. The teacher hands out copies of the UN Declaration of Human Rights intended for the participants to read and discuss whichever paragraph they consider the most important. Following the introduction, the participants are expected to pick a subject of choice, with reference to the issue of Human Rights:

Bosse (Teacher): "Well let´s start! Come on, tell me of all your ideas!"
JULIA: "I know what I want! I will write about Gandhi. That is what I can think of."
Bosse (T): "Good! That suits the theme…Now it´s time to invent the questions you have."
The adults look puzzled when the teacher urges them to speak up.
Bosse (T): " Here is your chance to write about something that interests you. Julia has already made up her mind. Is there someone else who wants to write about Mahatma Gandhi? …We put some subject areas on the blackboard then I´m sure all of you can find a group to work with. You always find someone to work with! …Will you start? What will you write about?
(Fieldnotes 990111)

The creativity and activity in the participants expected by the teacher are illustrated by the suggestion he makes at the beginning. One of the participants, Julia, quickly replies what she would like to work with while activity among the others reside. Several participants exchange confused looks, meanwhile Bosse accepts Julia's choice of Mahatma Gandhi as a subject to study. He seemingly judges her choice relevant to that of today's topic as well as of interest to her. In saying "time to invent the questions you have" the teacher expresses a manner of taking for granted that the phenomenon of the Human Rights issue exists in the participants' life worlds. From his point of view the participants can clearly think of questions or problems to be solved. He tries to make clear the logic of reasoning, as he says, "Here is your chance to write about something that interests you". The teacher acts as if the participants have done nothing but wait for the the right moment to choose to work with something of interest to them. The knowledge taken for granted in all the teacher says is that of the learner being able to identify the abstract connection between her interest and his topic of choice. The passage in the observation illustrates a pattern of typifying the participants. First, the teacher assumes the adult learners' interest in social issues in general, specifically that of Human Rights. Second, he bases his choice of manner of teaching on the assumption that they as adults developed abstract thinking in terms of viewing the world in a theoretical and scholastic way.

Julia's choice of Gandhi is also used in another strategy to push the participants, as in trying to serve it to some of the other adult learners. In the scene above this is illustrated when Bosse asks if someone else would like to work on the topic of Gandhi. Studying the participants

[34] von Wright (2000).
[35] The teachers decide the headline and do the overall framing. The participants choose literature according to their specific interests.

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response also shows that their proposals are much more tangible. The adult learners want to work with well known persons, countries, specific contexts or situations. Adults who can not identify their interest as related to the abstract topic are instead inspired by a concrete alternative from another participant. Further, the third strategy is to make use of social skills. What the learner wants to and can work with, or rather with whom, is conditioned by the experience of earlier situations and knowledge derived thereof. Choosing the third strategy reveals a weak interest in content of knowledge, where sociality is more important. Consequently the actions of choice can be two. Some participants may cultivate an interest of the topic when interacting with the group. Others create meaning based only on identifying with the perceived role of a pupil, in other words contributing to the group with a minimum of effort. Here the goal being to pass, not to intentionally learn something.

Summarizing, we want to show that the teacher takes for granted the learner's interest and its presumed impact on the working process. However, for the participant to choose a subject of relevance to the topic requires specific understanding of the topic introduced. Asking relevant questions is conditioned by whether the learner recognises the new information as related to her own interpretations. The constructivist principle is that creating knowledge presupposes connections between new and already made interpretations.[36]

How can the adult learners create and construct meaning using the three strategies possible as related to the teacher's act? Learners like Julia represent the category that possess the ability to start a working process driven by genuine interest as related to the teacher's abstraction. Julia is able to quickly identify her interest in reference to the topic "Human Rights". Therefore the act of Julia is consistent with the teacher's pedagogical standpoint. The question we ask ourselves is, what her act is structured by? One point is Julia´s interest in philosophy and existential issues, an interest born from different contexts experienced by her earlier, such as family, friends and attending school. Julia has been brought up in a family carrying an academic tradition where social issues and politics are discussed. She shares the particular interest in philosophy with her friends and it was a common topic in her prior time at an antroposophic folkhighschool. She is also familiar with the way of working, having participated in a similar form of education. As a result Julia is able to sort and structure information in order to be able to pose a question. Another aspect is that she owns the ability to identify what is expected of her in the role of the learner and can thus commit to the task. Julia can define Gandhi as a subject of relevance and is able to relate her interest to the teacher's topic based on the skills described.

The point to be made is that Julia becomes a good participant because she takes a genuine interest in the topic as well as does what is expected of her. Adult learners like Julia create space by owning the question, although loosely connected to the teacher's interest. The space is used to pursue her own project of bildung, still passing the grade. Julia is not actually interested in Human Rights as a phenomenon. In realising the principle of non-violence is vaguely connected to the issue she senses that Gandhi will be accepted as a subject to work with.

What really interests Julia, however, is Gandhi as a religious and philosophical figure and India as a country. She ponders her own background, having been adopted. The adoption took place when she was seven years old and is described as a traumatic event in her life. She never felt quite at home in her family or accepted as one of the siblings. Feeling alienated and

[36] Marton & Booth (1997).

suffering from a physical disability combined with a drug problem has caused problems in her earlier schooling. Working with the subject of Gandhi is a way for her to deal with her life in a more concrete way at 26 years of age. Also having become a parent, she seeks her roots in India.

The second strategy offered by the act of the teacher is identifying your interest as related to a groupmember's tangible choice. This strategy is chosen by participants like Henrik:

"Julia and I are alike, we often talk. … and politics and religion are there in her … I don't know anything about Gandhi, some kind of religious old man, a priest or something, I guess?"
(Henrik, participant 990111)

Through Julia's choice, Henrik can satisfy his interests. We state that Julia's structured choice of Gandhi, also structures knowledge for Henrik – the teacher's approval is guaranteed. Using Julia's proposed subject, Henrik is able to identify his interest in religion and politics. He interprets these phenomena as powerful tools in society. As a member of a music group, a hard core band, these interests are taken for granted in Henriks' lifeworld. But Henrik is not capable of grasping the topic of Human Rights and use it to come up with a subject of interest. However, using Julia's more tangible subject structures his choice. The change from an abstract phenomenon into a real person, in this case Gandhi, enables Henrik to begin his working process and relate it to his interest in religion.

Representing the category of learners who respond to the teacher's invitation to emphasize the relationship with other group members will be Robil. In this strategy other groupmembers decide what to work with, the interest in content is not important. Interest and commitment are created through other groupmembers' interests and the work process that takes shape:

"Ebba and Olivia are clever girls, the work will be done. …That´s good and their ambition urges me, too. …To be honest I chose this subject because of them, I really don´t care that much…It got better than I thought from the beginning, now I know the paragraphs (the UN Declaration of Human Rights) and it was fun to…put the pieces together. …I didn´t think it would be."
(Robil, participant 990322)

Other participants' interests create commitment in some participants, despite the fact that their own interest is weak or non-existent in the beginning. Those who manage to identify their interest as related to the teacher's topic serve as a tool to start a work process for those with little or no interest. The conversation, i.e. the social interaction and it's content, creates something recognisable to Robil. In the life world of Robil, freedom of religion is a centre of interest, after having fled his home country for religious reasons and he and his family having become refugees in Sweden. Reading the Declaration of Human Rights, Robil is not able to connect its content to the subject he considers the matter, that at heart he takes for granted. Nor is he able to identify his own interest with reference to choices of subjects made by other learners. He does, however, discover the correspondence through time while listening to students driven by their own interest. This way, Robil can learn what is meaningful to him, religiously connected paragraphs of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

Another variety of learners like Robil who choose their subject with reference to others interacting in the group will be illustrated in the description of Camilla. With learners like her the difference is that neither the choice of partner to work with nor the interaction between others will awaken their interest. Instead frustration arises, since learners like Camilla find the

manner of seeeking knowledge meaningless. This figure can not cope with the freedom of action. The lack of guidance will rather create an impediment for learning:

"I joined in with the mates, a group that works… But… I don't get it! After the teacher's babbling we have to find something that you just… don't really care about… Then the class wanders about aimlessly, grabbing any book and surfing unmethodically on Internet. The time just runs out…. No, we are just wasting our time. It's boring, you get frustrated. …No! I don t learn anything."
(Camilla, participant 990331)

Participants who choose the third strategy, finding it the only possible way, start acting instrumentally since this way of seeking knowledge seems meaningsless. Instead they want to influence social aspects of classroom life as smoking rules, coffe breakes and suchlike. They identify the great exemption, that they are allowed exploration of their own interest. But appearently they *miss "missing" influence* in subject content. Pedagogically however, no one argues *why* they should have influence on the subject content, and conditions do not allow them to own the question.[37] Nor do they attribute value to their own interest due to lack of self esteem. Learners of this category also lack in knowledge as in being able to relate a possible interest to tangible or abstract proposed areas to study. The learners are simply not given the opportunity to become co-constructors in the classroom. They are not allowed to become familiar with the role of a participant. The groups have difficulty getting started, they get stuck and are often dependent on the teacher's help. Despite abundant supervision, the participants *do not experience* any support from the teacher. On these conditions the teacher is not able to supervise because the learners are not able to pose their question. Thus, participants do not develop ownership of the questions, which means eliminating one prerequisite in meaningful learning.

From the teachers perspective one important task is deprogramming the adult learners. The latter need to get rid of earlier experience of schooling in order to aquire a new way of creating knowledge. The teachers are well aware the participants experience difficulty in dealing with the manner of working. In their opinion the reason is simply the students not being used to and not wanting to work similar to a research process. The participants are typified as individuals wanting ready packaged knowledge, which lead the teachers to pursue the manner of working as an andragogical ideal.[38] The teachers label the phenomenon a problem of acclimatization. In time the adult learners will realise what is to be done and when, meanwhile the participants are just lazy. This way the situation is self-regulatory.[39].Choosing either strategy to cope, the students all articulate the problem similarly, but different from that of the teacher. They find a lack of contingency in the content of knowledge. Fragmentation in the introduction hinders the ability to formulate questions. Getting started requires support in thinking and keeping the pace requires some sort of discipline. The students seek teachers who help in creating goals as well as provide identifiable fixed points along the way.[40] Learners who are not able to create interest and thus act in an instrumental way experience little stimulance. In an effort to satisfy the need for coherence and meaningfulness they choose to take advantage of the exemption provided, thus withdrawing from the teacher and the classroom. In reference to the participants' different

[37] Illeris (2000).
[38] Knowles (1980).
[39] Larsson et al (1990). One presumption in andragogical ideals is that adults are mature and less dependent than children. Adults aim at responsability and locus of control, therefore the pedagogy should be adjusted to the adults' needs and interests.
[40] Bernstein (1977); Sundgren (1996).

ways of creating meaning in the idea of using own interest as a starting point, a pedagogical dilemma, perhaps even a paradox, is revealed.

Taking the adult learners' own interest for granted as in proposing it as the driving force for learning actually excludes many participants in our study. Those unable to create meaning in teaching and learning drop out. Especially after the first semester there are a lot of drop-outs. Those who choose to stay although unable to create meaning, act motivated by an instrumental point of view. Meaning is then created in reference to the learner identity "this is the way to do it". The latter category commit to participation even though they find it meaningless with reference to their own learning. Consequently *formal knowledge* seems to have restricted possibilities to leave specific trace in their everyday life. A few of those highly motivated and familiar with school are able to deal with the andragogical ideal, to use genuine interest as a starting point. The combination of the ability to identify the code, what is expected of the participants, and self-confidence enough to express own interest creates learning, conditioned by 'the clever girls'. Participants driven by intellectual motives, transform work processes staged by teachers into learning processes.[41]

From a participant perspective, we have discussed the classroom as a meaningful as well as a pointless activity. The teacher in the professional role carries the symbolical responsibility of creating pedagogical and organisational conditions for learning. In a relational perspective however, making the participant a co-constructor for what is possible to learn, brings up the project of bildung. One aspect of the project of bildung is the intentions motivating the participants for education. The intentions are revealed in the following categories:

Education as...

- ***qualification for work or further education***

"...well, of course I know it. If you're going to get a job today you must have an education. It's as simple as that, you see!"
(Charlotte, participant 990126)

- ***self-realization***

"Yeees, why am I here? Yes, most people in my age think it's a little bit crazy (giggle) To quit work just like that without knowing how to earn one's living. But I thought – it's now or never! I'm incurably curious. Can you imagine!? To study just for fun and related only to my <u>own</u> interest... and knowledge never do you any harm, does it?"
(Karin, participant 990129)

- ***lifestyle***

"...My mates, they are already at the university...Don't know what to study but it really doesn't matter... Just knowing <u>that</u> I'm going to study... the university, everybody does... or maybe not... but yes, that's my opinion. I want to study something in the behavioural sciences. I think education...you get more intereste! in debates ...or doing something real, not only for yourself!
(Petter, participant 990125)

- ***activity***

"...it's for the money, what else is there for me? I won't get a job here (in Sweden) they won't hire people like me. You must have the right background, be a Swede or have the right ethnicity. In times like this I must help my family and send as much money as I can."
(Ali, participant 990107)

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[41] Flavell (1963). Piaget uses the term intellectual motive as a driving force for learning.

"...I can't see any other alternative. I'm familiar with my school...you must do something, you know! As a husband and unemployed you can't just waste your time doing nothing. It's not enough to sit and chat in cafes, but you know, ... I can't tell them (the family in the native country) that in Sweden as an adult you go to school doing nothing, just fooling around (giggle). It's not to be a real man, but staying at the house, doing women's work, it's... it's...silly – seriously, then you go crazy!"
(Asad, participant 990118)

"I was just so tired of it! I just had to get away... work...get away from it, when you're so exhausted...not feeling any...not committed to people. ...it's the same again and again, day after day. So this is really something, it's perfect!
(Irene, participant 990115)

Most participants express a variety of intentions or reasons for studying. Consequently, each participant can be found in more than one category. Even when primarily included in one of the first three categories "*qualification for work or further education*", "*self-realisation*" or "*lifestyle*", several participants qualify for the category "*activity*". Taking part in education can compensate for experienced insufficiency in everyday life. In essence education becomes compensation for something else, a temporary solution. The adult learner's actual participation is then at stake. Learners are more or less forced to act from an instrumental viewpoint because education is seemingly meaningless. At this point the projects of bildung regress as education regarded as compensation comes to the forefront. The change in the projects of bildung makes taking part in education no more than a means of supporting oneself. All in all, a strikingly large number of learners in the group of this study find the events taking place in the classroom meaningless. Although a slightly discouraging picture evolves from a participant's perspective, change in terms of learning does happen. The adult learners' experiences from the classroom, positive or negative, must be related to their biographies –who learns what?

Biographical pieces as related to learning

One important point is that data are created in a co-constructive process, the interplay between researchers and actors in the field. The meaning of taking part in adult education is analysed at a meta-level in terms of a perspective of knowledge and learning. Dimensions like handling new situations, interpreting formal knowledge and change in premonitions of education, developing new interests, raising self esteem as well as qualifying oneself for work or higher education are focused. Analysis is firstly based on the participants' voice as related to learning, secondly on a meta-level the participants' interpretations of knowledge and learning, and thirdly on the researchers' voice of the participants' learning. The following fragments are collected from interviews with two women, Pernilla and Frida. The fragments narrate motives for studying and conceptions of the educational event as well as self image.

Dialogue from the first interview with Pernilla:

Pernilla: "...I was on the sick-list and felt really depressed after the divorce. Men! Just walk away like that! ...The only realistic alternative was studying and this is... and I'm... sort of...on my way. ...Maybe... I want to be a teacher, that's what I can think of, yes...It will be fun to study again, as long as I can manage...I hope so. But I know what I want... this... teacher."
Interviewer (I): "...a teacher? How come?"
Pernilla: "Well...a secret dream is journalism.... But... it requires... no and, no... it's nothing to talk... You just become unemployed. There are a lot of clever people competing for the same job, only the best get a job. No! Teacher is what I can think of, ...one must be... realistic."

(Pernilla, participant 990118)

Dialogue from the last interview with Pernilla:

I: "It´s been a year since we met. …Can you tell us about it…?"
Pernilla: "I´ve been studying…(giggle)"
I: "Mmm… to become a teacher?"
Pernilla: "Oh no! No, I´m in education… journalism."
I: "Journalism? But you won´t get a job…will you?"
Pernilla: "Of course I´ll get a job! Who says… anything else?"
I: "I wanted to…a sort of …provoke you according to all our conversations… about this with journalism. You often said that it´s hard to get a job as…"
Pernilla: " No, no! Did I? (giggle). …You get a job, of course you get a job, just fight for it and everything will turn out allright… The teachers have been great! They pushed me and pushed me again, and when you make it, it gives you a kick. You know, you can! …And now, I'm doing really well. I'm actually good! You hear that? I say it often… Some people think I'm cocky, but who cares… I have to do what I want and am passionate about!"
(Pernilla, participant 001115)

Pernilla's story reveals that the decision to start studying again has come as a result of a life crisis. Pernilla has been on sick-leave for a while, caused by a work related injury and she starts participating in education of a kind not according to her interests. When her husband asks for a divorce, her self esteem is damaged and she drops out. Pernilla says she realises as time goes by that she needs to get on with her life, for both her and her son's own good. Returning to her job is impossible, and a realistic choice would be studying to be a teacher. In order to qualify for university she is obliged to take one year at the upper secondary level. Pernilla's choice is to attend folk high school, since it serves the possibility to study in daytime. She wants to spend time with her son in the evenings and on weekends. Conclusively Pernilla is motivated to study, her experience from earlier schooling is positive and she's relatively accustomed to studying. Growing up she was raised in an environment with a positive attitude towards education, studying and pursuing a career one appreciates is natural. At the same time, going through a divorce, feeling abandoned and being on sick-leave has hurt her self-confidence. She doubts her own capability but is also given support by her mother. Choosing to study to be a teacher is a rational rather than intellectual choice made by Pernilla. If she were to choose from genuine interest she would follow in her father's footsteps and become a journalist. In the dialogue above we see that Pernilla considers the journalist profession somewhat of an utophian idea she hardly dares speak of. The moment she utters her dream she takes it back.

In the last interview, Pernilla has pursued her studying and surprisingly enough she has applied for and been accepted at a school of journalism. How can we understand the change? Pernilla's story about her experience from the classrom is coloured in pink. She has had fun, she feels she has learned a lot and she emphasizes the teachers' amazing support. Altogether it has contributed to a strengthened self-confidence. Pernilla not only senses she is a high achiever, she is also able to talk about it. She is proud of her study results, and her son is well and in harmony. Contrary she has experienced men's interest in her as a woman that declines when she talks about her studying. People say things like "You're so deep" or "You're too serious". At the same time Pernilla is not desperate in this matter: "I think I´m more choosy about men nowadays. I realise, …I can manage on my own." In the dialogue Pernilla´s reorientation in reference to career choice is interesting. The compensatory choice of becoming a teacher has been replaced by a genuine interest, to become a journalist. To give priority to the genuine interest, even when generating possible consequences such as future unemployment due to strong competition among journalists, is now so self-evident that she no

longer describes it in terms of a choice. She puts it rather in terms of being true to herself. Participation in adult education is seen to contribute to strengthen and deepen Pernilla´s genuine interest. The change in perspective in Pernilla between the first and last interview is so obvious concerning this phenomenon she is actually surprised when confronted with the statement that finding a job as a journalist is difficult.

Dialogue from the first interview with Frida:

Frida: "…I hope it´ll be fun so I can stand it. That the teachers care and help me when I need it –I sure do need that…I´m not a bright girl you know! …they (friends) say the teachers are good and that´s important. But I´ll never be a swot, I have other things to do. …I´m surprised at myself sitting at the desk again. …But they say it´s a necessity even for getting a job at the factory. …You can´t even go shopping without listening to this…this AEI talk. But…they (teachers) haven´t got the schedule ready yet. What about that?!"
(Frida, participator 990108)

Dialogue from the last interview with Frida:

I: "…It´s been a while since we´ve met, can you tell us -?"
Frida: "I did it! …On second thoughts… It wasn´t so clever to say something like that to her (teacher)…"
I: "What are you referring to…?"
Frida: "Don´t you remember? When Mona (teacher) told us to watch telly and do this crazy analysis. I just said: "I use my free time as I want to! And I never watch the boring endless news." At that time… she was only stupid…and mean…I felt…that´s enough I quit!"
I: "What happened then?"
Frida: "I didn´t care. But then she called me and said: "You only have this task to write, then you´re finished." My sister-in-law did it for me, she´s keen on writing. But then… yeees, I see…yes my responsability too and you can´t learn if you´re not interested. If there´ll be a next time…I know how it works, I know what you can say, and can´t say!"
(Frida, participant 001205)

Starting adult education is far from obvious to Frida. Contrary it is more of an only option since studying to her is just a mean to qualify for a job, even one not requiring higher levels of education. The notion of education leading to a job exists in her family as well as among her friends. Studying is seen as compensating the lack of a job. Her time in compulsory school is described by Frida as "living hell", often the victim of bullying and unforgiving teachers. In her encounters with authorities like the unemployment agency and the national and municipal social security services she is urged to start studying. Frida is not self-confident enough to initiate studying on her own. Her new live-in boyfriend acts as the concluding variable when promising to support her in going through with studying. Overall Frida seems very dependent on her boyfriend "…he's everything to me! Without him it… just wouldn't work." Frida´s expectations of participation in education are low, she hopes no more than being able to put up with it. She has made her choice of municipal adult education based on recognition from her friends having attended the same school. Frida's lack of faith in her own ability makes her worry about whether she will be able to succeed as a student. At the same time she is not willing to let education take priority as in inflicting much change in her everyday routine. Frida's premonition of success is placed outside her locus of control. The responsibility for learning belongs to the teacher, who must recognise Frida and her needs. Participation is entirely on her conditions. She points out that her relationship to the teacher is of definite importance. Recurrent in Frida's story is the same pattern in social relations, people are categorised as bearers of fixed characteristics, such as nice-unfriendly, friend-enemy, good-bad etcetera.

In the last interview with Frida she has not been able to find a job, but is engaged in a municipal occupational project for women. She says this is a temporary solution, the project is really aimed at a different target group. Frida thinks she should continue studying, since she has not finished, but needs a break. The education taken part in has not meant an awakened interest, as in being intellectually motivated. Education is still seen by her as something simply neccessary to get a job, but exists as a possible future alternative. She finds she has not learned much, what you do in school is not of particular interest to her. However, Frida understands her choice, for example not taking part in media's ongoing social debate. Despite the fact that Frida only finished her first year of three, she has become more self-confident as related to her studies. This shows in her dependence on other adults surrounding her. Her boyfriend has moved out, something she mourns, but is able to cope with and explains as an effect of her better self-confidence acquired while studying.

What makes Frida's story interesting is that even though she has not finished her education or found a job, she expresses learning in terms of redefining student identity. She has identified a code concerning how a pupil is expected to behave in a classroom. Frida expresses the ability to change perspective when explaining an understanding of the teacher's ambition and accepts the logic that learning requires the participant's initiative as well as the teacher's. Having changed her viewpoint has also changed her view of the relationship between her and the teacher as well as others in her environment. We consider this an expression of a change in Frida's self image – she is now a co-actor in the process and not just a passive receiver.

In this text we have shown samples of how education colours the individual adult's everyday life. Earlier in discussing everyday life of the classroom we brought forward the responsibility of teachers, as in the learning made possible on their account. We will now point out the adult learners' biographies as playing as large a part of learning. In the examples told of from Pernilla and Frida's biographies their narratives show of associating features. When it comes to actual contents of *formal knowledge* neither of them has deepened their knowledge much. It is not surprising considering what we know about classroom curriculum but these extracts of biographies still provide proof of some learning in a positive way. One year after taking classes these adults play a more active role in their lives with a larger locus of control. When Pernilla and Frida express themselves in drawing pictures[42] they attribute importance to the education in terms of happiness, the importance of other students and a greater self-efficiency.

Concerned thoughts in reference to the learner's perspective

Problemising the adult learners interest as a point of departure in teaching and learning should not be interpreted as distancing from democratic ideals as in the participants' possibilities of influencing education.[43] However, andragogical ideals impose great demand on the organiser of education. Our study shows that ideals are employed without reflection. The teachers' pedagogical design corresponds poorly to intended logic. Education expressed in this manner undermines the ideas and thoughout principles in themselves, thus creating an opposite effect. To actually use the interest in the learner as the guiding principle, and for the learner to become a co-actor, a reorientation of learner identity is necessary as well as that of the

[42] The adult learners verbal narratives of the meaning of participation was the main data constructed, but they also expressed themselves in other ways. Some of them chose to draw a symbolic picture, some of them summarized their feelings in a few written words.
[43] Sundgren (1996).

teacher. One possiblity presenting itself is for the actors to commit to a pedagogical contract with the purpose of creating genuine encounters between people, to actually see the Other.

Adult learners in the study have knowledge of the ideological background of the teachers' project at the policy level, the challenge is understanding its consequences in the everyday curriculum of the classroom. Underlying presumptions embodied in school practice, phenomena like knowledge and learning are difficult to relate to as well as using the logic of school discourse. For example, what does it mean to take responsibility for your learning? The manner in which teaching and learning are organised from the point of departure taken is that it is self-evident to the participants how to make oneself understood in practice. Participants are to seek literature and material using their own posed question. Often they find themselves left alone in the work process with no guidance. The way of developing knowledge is taken for granted arguing the rutinised work method is omitted. At times when questioned by the participants the teachers argue the work method simply by referring to it as the scientific way of describing the world, taking for granted it is the best way to learn something. Consequently the participants act rationally, imitate the work method with no genuine understanding or choose to withdraw from the task that in the end is something they will suffer from. The work method is onesided and better understanding will not be the result. Genuine knowledge could possibly be created through variation and the ability to understand different perspectives.[44] The teachers´ role when participants present their results is that of a judge, a character with the answers at hand. The participants perceive they have not come up to the teacher´s expectations, but are in no way challenged to pursue the search for knowledge.[45] Further they are not given the opportunity to understand deficiencys in their work or in what manner they could continue the work. The participants create no meaning thus not deepening their knowledge. The framing of contents and work structure is never made and the response to the presented work makes neither structure nor deeper understanding of knowledge possible.[46] Making the cultural grammar in the classroom visible can be one way of presenting better conditions for the creation of meaning and learning[47]. The point taken being that a visible content could be constructed in reference to school grammar. However, learning how to make oneself understood in school is not only about an abstract use of school language, but about understanding and being able to use figures of thought. Perhaps the most important is for participants to learn to trust their own interests in order to be able to claim their learning. This way it would be made possible for a larger number of adult learners to be included in school culture.

We argue that all teaching methods include certain negative aspects in terms of unintended effects. The question here is which category of participants the AEI includes or excludes, keeping in mind the target group of the project. The teachers have chosen a pedagogical ideal without realising its consequences. The conditions for learning eliminate success to the relatively small group of participants able to create meaning on such conditions. These are an elite, used to studying and motivated by selfinterest, which means they would probably cope,

[44] Marton & Booth (1997).
[45] Meads philosophy (in von Wright, 2000) is often used as a perspective studying social interaction, micro-sociology. As a matter of fact his thoughts could be used as related to learning although he is rather vague. The subject is not reflective or self-confident on her own. To develop these abilities we must *find* ourselves in social interaction confronting differences and varities so habits and interpretations taken-for-granted will be challenged. This means that we put ourselves in problem-solving situations discussing different solutions.
[46] Larsson (1996). One condition for learning is that teachers' respond to the learners' interpretations recurrently. Usually teachers' respond according to grade or in a generally abstract way. The consequences in terms of learning are modest.
[47] Carlgren (1997).

independing on what goes on in the classroom. The group of successful participants are not consistent with the general category of participants recruited for the AEI. The participants in the AEI have experienced a less successful earlier schooling commonly combined with traumatic events. Signals from the surrounding society more or less force people to take part in education. The underlying presumtion suggesting being that unemployment is an effect of a lack of education. A great number of people lacking upper secondary education accept the offer of participation, but can not experience it based on conditions presented. The political intentions of the educational project with the purpose of enhancing democracy will be obstructed. The paradox results in participants being let down twofoldedly. In practice the adults do not qualify for work or education and elitism working both ways arises. Further the project is legitimised by the teachers misinterpretation of the participants' difficulties in dealing with the invitation to use own interest as a point of departure for learning. Communication comes to a halt due to large numbers of participants who neither dare nor can communicate that the teachers begin at the wrong end – in an attempt to put the cart in front of the horse.[48]

Summarising our line of reasoning, andragogical ideals or pedagogical thinking putting the participant at the centre of attention with a large locus of control in formal learning, are not problematic in themselves. The problem is rather that the educational institutions assume these ideals, strand at the rethorical level not taking into consideration the practical consequences. Our conclusion is that ideals based on the active participant impose unreasonable demands on the educational institution.[49] In the case where the teacher presents a well-thought-through plan it is pursued without considering the Other, the learner. With a variety of styles of working, more participants might be able to experience the idea of participating in education. As researchers we argue that learning should be related to the specific content to be learned.[50] We seemingly contradict ourselves, but formal adult education is guided by a national plan and the content cannot vary apart from the intentions in the plan and the teacher's demand for examination is not negotiable. Switching to the principle that learning itself is a priority would define the professional role and responsibility more distinctively than when enhancing the learner's own interest as the matter of priority.

In conclusion, meaningless education can never be justified by simply making a symbolic reference to the participants´ responsibility for learning. This way the participants' prospects of relational learning are dependent on teachers. Learning is essentially understood over time and criteria for a successful outcome defined by actors involved in the subsequent conversation.[51] With the perspective of the participant as the point of departure, interaction is seen as participatory and learning understood as defined by the participants' descriptions of activities that create meaning.

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[48] When teachers and learners do not experience genuine interaction the teachers urges the participants to take responsibility as grown-ups. When relations are brought up for discussion the teachers tend to interpret the problem as related to the learners' disabilities. In that way the teachers relieve themselves of the problem. The participants can not question the definition of the problem since they are in the postition of the pupil being less powerful, even though they are adults. The phrase "Blame the victim" could be used to describe the situation (Ott, 2000).

[49] Bernstein (1977); Sundgren (1986). When the subject content is not given and the education is characterised by openness, the demand for structure increases and the teachers' must act in a similar way. The principle must also be visible for the learners and part of everyday actions. The lack of consistency creates situations that enables power to operate in an arbitrary way. A situation arises counteracting the origin pedagogical project.

[50] Piaget (in Flavell, 1963) also discusses learning in these terms.

[51] von Wright (2000).

The above reasoning is further enhanced since interaction is mainly created on the teachers' conditions. Teachers are more qualified to exert power through the existing routine of school and own the right to set classroom agenda.[52] Most certainly negotiating will arise, simply proving that the teachers' power evoke counterstrategies in the students.[53] However, they are situated and the effect only temporary. The institution's and the teachers' project of bildung does not change, negotiations arise in reference to the students' own projects of bildung. In practice this means that the project of bildung regresses and finally students choose to drop out.

When the teacher symbolically abdicates from responsibility despite being the one defining the content of knowledge as well as communication in the classroom, sham democracy evolves.[54] From a participant's perspective the school practice is therefore difficult to deal with, the exertion of power is both arbitrary and unpredictable. From time to time the participants "win" the struggle for power and their counterstrategy temporarily grounds the preferential right of interpretation owned by the teacher. In other situations the teachers set limits and discipline based on self-evident legitimacy. Figuration of this sort is possibly a characteristic of human interaction when encounters occur as a part of social context creating meaning.[55] Frustration on behalf of the adult learners is not a question of the teachers' possibilities and presumed right to exert power.[56] The treachery is rather composed of in what *manner* relations in school practice are discussed, hence underestimating the participants ability to analyse communication. When the actors are marketed as being equally powerful, action takes place in asymmetrical ways. The teachers define the participants' freedom of movement and the interaction is only simulated.[57] Presumably the problem could be handled when the simulated independence is accepted by participants who are aware that no genuine independency exists. Through faith in the teacher's professionalism, the semifree relationship withstands as long as the adult learners are treated and respected as co-constructors.[58]

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[52] Larsson (2001a; 2001b) discusses seven aspects of democracy as related to study circles. The author examines different concepts of democracy in reference to learning situations. Empirically these conditions can be hard to fulfil even in something as free and voluntary as study circles. If we relate the same conditions to formal adult education it will be even harder to fulfil the project according to the teachers' formal right to plan the teaching and learning and make the participants' knowledge as a matter of judgement.

[53] Larsson (1993).

[54] Bernstein (1977); Sundgren (1986).

[55] von Wright (2000).

[56] Foucault (1972; 1993).

[57] Uljens (1998) quotes Masschelein (1996, p 86): "Die Gleichwertigkeit der partner erweist sich so als Schein, den sie wird vom Erzieher Geschenkt… Die Intention des Zöglings kann nur dadurch zu ihrem Recht kommen, dass der Erzieher sie auf eine bestimmte Weise begreift und ihr eine Chance gibt, d.h. die Situation derartig strukturiert, dass der Zögling "seine" Intentionen verwirklichen kann."
(The same quote in swedish) "Parternas likvärdighet visar sig alltså vara skenbar, eftersom den skänks av fostraren… Elevens intention kan endast därigenom komma till sin rätt då fostraren uppfattar denna likvärdighet på ett bestämt sätt och ger den en chans, dvs strukturerar situationen så att eleven kan förverkliga "sina" intentioner."
(Free translation) The actors equivalence seems to be illusory when given by the fosterer… The pupil's intention can only be fulfilled when the fosterer *experience* the equivalence in a special way and gives it a chance, the teacher consciously organize the teaching and learning so that the pupil can realize her intentions.

[58] Ibid.

The pedagogical contract[59]

As researchers we offer no solution of how classroom practice is to be handled. Our objective in research is rather driven by a uthopian wish, that the state of things *could* be different.[60] Perhaps the school's task and mission is to be a sanctuary where genuine human encounters can be striven for? Encounters can not be created solely from teachers' intentions but demand participants' acceptance.[61] For interaction to be characterised by genuinity, participants must also have *experienced* the encounter. Our empirical study show that teachers and adult learners do not take the time in school practice. The actors *do* different things and *talk* of different things, seldom do they interact in the essence of the word and so, the genuine encounter never takes place. If the democratic conversation or dialogue aimed at unpredicted outcome is not to be found in school, where does it take place? To let teachers and adult learners meet in the classroom does not automatically generate learning in the intended direction. Participation does not evolve on its own. We argue that a part of the professional role is taking responsibility for what becomes possible through the built-in assymmetry in formal education.

An alternative way of enhancing the possibilities for participants to create learning processes on their own terms[62] is negotiating a pedagogical contract. The contract is agreed between the actors involved in order for learning to be created in the wished for direction. The participants learn to identify what they are capable of and know or how they are to interpret different phenomena. What do they want and need to learn; what shall *we* do? Also, How is the agreed learning to take place; how should *we* do it? The pedagogical contract also questions the teachers' symbolic definition of who the adult is or should be. Irrespective of whether the intentions of adult education is "taking care of" and curing alienated adults or including them in the community through increasing their qualifications for finding work, the project is a failure if participants do not experience participation. When teachers in this study expect the participants to take responsibility for their learning, we, as researchers want to urge adult educators to actually perceive the task of educating as an ethical and political responsibility. Another way to express our wish is; what possibilities does school provide for adults to create and recreate their biographies?[63]

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[59] Ibid. The concept pedagogical contract serves as a support for thinking when making the mutual commitment to the social curriculum. Learning in formal adult education can only appear when the learner accepts the teacher. In our perspective the successful pedagogue is not someone who chooses the right key in her bunch to open the participant's symbolic door. Rather she gets it from the participant herself. The crucial point is that the visitor, the teacher, has to visit the house as a guest on the terms agreed upon.

[60] Anderson (1999).

[61] Biesta (1998).

[62] Borgnakke (1996). Argues that when studying phenomenon such as learning we have to make a difference between the working process and the learning process. Automatically the working process does not generate genuine learning.

[63] Alheit (1995). The author claims that knowledge only can be understood as genuine experience as related to biographicity: "Only when specific individuals relate to their lifeworld in such a way that their self-reflexive acitivities begin to shape social contexts, is contact established with that key qualification of modern times, what I have termed elsewhere 'biographicity'. Biographicity means that we can redesign again and again, from scratch, the contours of our life within the specific contexts... The main issue is to decipher the 'surplus meanings' of our biographical knowledge, and that in turns means to perceive the potentiality of our *unlived lives*." (1995, p 65).

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